that it was a pleasure to be there. Are there not some Englishmen clothed in purple and fine linen, but careful and troubled about many things, who might even envy the ascetic in his rags ?

But to return to the river. What is it, then, this magnetic spell which the Holy Mother exerts over her children—so that many spend their lives in the effort to reach, her shores, and die happy if resting on her bosom ? Is it all delusion ? Does the virtue they ascribe to her waters exist only in their imaginations ? I am trying to show you Benares and the Ganges as they are to the Hindu, who says that the waters have been blest by Divine Beings, and by holy men, and more I know not—except this one fact, stubborn as its kind: The Government Analyst, in his published report on the Ganges, says that her water is the purest of the pure, and that it has a peculiar power of absorbing and destroying all kinds of impurity and contagion. And a brahman who read this report,

himself an honours man in science, said with a smile, "So, then, we have not been so wrong all these years, after all!"

All these years ! Through what hoary

centuries